

REMARKS:

I. Introduction

In the Office Action mailed on March 27, 2008, the Examiner rejected claims 1 to 26. The present amendment cancels no claims, amends claims 1, 2, 10, 12, 16, 17, 20, 22, and 25, and adds no new claims. Accordingly, claims 1 to 26 remain pending in this application.

II. Claim Rejections Based on 35 U.S.C. § 102

The Examiner rejected claims 1 to 26 under 35. U.S.C. § 102(b) as anticipated by Zanin (US 4,576,100).

Zanin discloses a crane for a nuclear waste handling facility which includes a number of auxiliary or back up systems which are utilized upon failure of main systems. The crane travels along rails (106) using main wheels (174, 176, 178, 180). The crane also has auxiliary wheels (182, 184, 186, 188) which depend from hydraulic cylinders (212, 214, 216, 218). In normal operation, the auxiliary wheels are suspended above the rails. In the event of a breakdown of one or more of the main wheels, the load can be carried by the adjacent auxiliary wheel by lowering the auxiliary wheel to the rail using the hydraulic cylinder. The hydraulic cylinders are activated and controlled from a hydraulic manifold mounted (225) on the exterior of a control cabinet (116) located in a conductor bus alleyway (126). The main and auxiliary wheels are driven by primary drive mechanisms (230, 232) including wound rotor motors (250, 252). Secondary drive mechanisms (234, 236) including wound rotor motors (280, 282) are utilized in the event of failure of the primary drive mechanisms. Tertiary drive mechanisms (238, 240) including a hydraulic drive motors (300) are utilized in the event of failure of the primary and secondary drive mechanisms. The hydraulic drive motors are activated and controlled from the hydraulic manifold. To activate the tertiary drive mechanisms, an operator enters the conductor bus alleyway wearing special clothing and connects a portable electric hydraulic drive to the manifold to activate the tertiary drives or manually via a remote control. See column 6, lines 12 to 23. Zanin discloses hydraulic back up systems for both the main wheels and the drive motors. The hydraulic back up systems are manually activated by an operator either separately or together depending on the type of failure.

In contrast, the crane return system of the preset invention automatically moves the auxiliary wheels to the rails upon the loss of power and automatically activates the drive motor when the auxiliary wheels have been moved to the rails. As a result, the crane is automatically returned to a home position whenever there is a loss of power to the crane. At the home position, suitable repairs can be made if necessary.

Independent claim 1 and claims dependent therefrom, are each allowable at least because they each include the limitation of “wherein when power is lost to the crane, hydraulic fluid is automatically supplied to the hydraulic cylinder to extend the hydraulic cylinder and thereby move the auxiliary drive wheels from the first position to the second position” and “wherein when the auxiliary drive wheels are in the second position, hydraulic fluid is automatically diverted from the hydraulic cylinder and supplied to the drive motor to rotate the auxiliary drive wheels and move the bridge toward a home position”. No prior art of record reasonably discloses or suggests the present invention as currently defined by independent claim 1. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection is requested.

Independent claim 10 and claims dependent therefrom, are each allowable at least because they each include the limitation of “wherein when power is lost to the crane, hydraulic fluid is automatically delivered from the hydraulic fluid pressure vessel to the hydraulic cylinder to extend the hydraulic cylinder and thereby move the auxiliary drive wheels from the first position to the second position” and “wherein when the auxiliary drive wheels are in the second position, hydraulic fluid is automatically diverted from the hydraulic cylinder and delivered from the hydraulic fluid pressure vessel to the drive motor to rotate the auxiliary drive wheels and move the bridge toward a home position”. No prior art of record reasonably discloses or suggests the present invention as currently defined by independent claim 10. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection is requested.

Independent claim 20 and claims dependent therefrom, are each allowable at least because they each include the limitation of “upon a loss of power to the crane, automatically supplying hydraulic fluid from the hydraulic fluid pressure vessel to a hydraulic cylinder interconnected with the auxiliary drive wheels” and “automatically supplying hydraulic fluid from

the hydraulic fluid pressure vessel to a drive motor when the auxiliary drive wheels contact the rail to drive the auxiliary drive wheels such that the bridge travels along the rail toward the home position". No prior art of record reasonably discloses or suggests the present invention as currently defined by independent claim 20. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection is requested.

III. CONCLUSION

In light of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that the present application is in a condition for allowance and notice to that effect is hereby requested. If it is found that that the present amendment does not place the application in a condition for allowance, applicant's undersigned attorney requests that the examiner initiate a telephone interview to expedite prosecution of the application. If there are any fees resulting from this communication, please charge same to our Deposit Account No. 50-3915.

Respectfully submitted,



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June 11, 2008

Re. Application Number 10/563,775

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